

In his important book, *Conjuring Hitler: How Britain and America Made the Third Reich*, Dr. Preparata has displayed an impressive ability to handle a variety of issues and an ability to present a complex history in a clear and readable way. *Conjuring Hitler* provides a rich and dense treatment of some quite complicated and extremely significant events. It is an unusual achievement. He handles difficult topics with skill and thoroughness, ranging from (circa p. 129) his discussion of the relationship between gold and monetary policy. He has woven together a mass of information relating to national and international economic and political developments in the roughly twenty-five years leading up to World War Two. The book as a whole adds greatly to our knowledge of two factors relevant to the rise of Hitler –the economic forces shaping the circumstances of that rise and the role of external pressures.

His arguments about the role played in Germany's turn to extremism of world economic developments, particularly in the 1931 to 1933 period, and of the machinations of the financial elites in the United States, England and Germany are convincing. Dr. Preparata presents an incisive analysis of the underlying relations among the policy-makers in the three countries, particularly between English and German elites, and he has made a convincing case that the actions taken by influential figures in the United States and England contributed to the rise of Hitler. In the process he has not only filled in gaps left by people such as President Clinton's Georgetown University professor, Carroll Quigley (in his *The Anglo-American Establishment* and in *Tragedy and Hope*), but has advanced the explanation and given additional emphasis to economic factors. He has drawn on vast secondary literature in several languages to construct a descriptive and explanatory history that offers a somewhat new understanding of one of the most important developments in modern history. He makes the case that for at least some elites outside Germany, the aim was to foster a mutually destructive conflict between Germany and the USSR. Preparata argues that Germany's destruction was top priority.

In modern societies much takes place out of view of the vast majorities of peoples. The results of such decisions often appear only when their impact or effects are felt. One of the important duties of the academic community is to shed light on all of the channels through which influence, authority and power are exercised. This is to contribute to the workings of an open and democratic society. Professor Preparata's *Conjuring Hitler* makes an important contribution in this regard.

The arguments made in this book are presented in such detail and with such high level of clarity that they invite others to challenge or support them on the basis of evidence. The scientific process itself requires that an attempt be made to ask and answer all relevant questions about a given subject. This is in the end the task of the scientific community, not of one individual. Dr. Preparata has written what will be to some a controversial book. In fact he has furthered the scientific enterprise by asking some previously unasked questions and by offering supported and coherent answers to those questions. In the process he mentioned views contrary to his own and in more than one instance simply said he did not know. I have been doing research on and writing about political and economic power for over twenty-five years and I found his handling of events, issues, and processes to be based on reasoned conclusions and judgments. In almost all cases his arguments were immediately supported by reference to other research or facts. In the few instances where his assertions were not backed up immediately by

documented or referenced facts, those assertions were obviously based on many years of immersion on the issues and literature.

Dr. Preparata has contributed in a very significant way to our understanding of modern history. He has enlightened us about what Thorstein Veblen would have called “the main drift” of the crucial events leading up to World War Two.

April 28, 2006

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